

Medicare Part D

ARE YOU, OR A FAMILY MEMBER, MEDICARE ELIGIBLE (OR ABOUT TO BECOME MEDICARE ELIGIBLE)? IF SO, PLEASE READ AND KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS!

Notice of Creditable Coverage

Your prescription drug coverage provided under Hospice of the Western Reserve Health & Welfare Plan is expected to pay out, on average, the same or more than what the standard Medicare prescription drug coverage will pay. This is known as "creditable coverage".

Why This is Important

This information is to help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare drug plan. It is important for those eligible for both Medicare and a group health plan to look ahead and weigh the costs, benefits, and participation terms of the various options on a regular, if not annual, basis. Based on individual facts and circumstances some choose to elect Medicare only, some choose to elect coverage under the group health plan only, while some choose to enroll in both coverages. When both are elected, benefits coordinate according to the Medicare Secondary Payer Rules. That is, one plan or the other would reduce payment in order to prevent you from being reimbursed the full amount from both sources. Your age, the reason for your Medicare eligibility and other factors determine which plan is primary (pays first, generally without reductions) versus secondary (pays second, generally with reductions).

When Are You Eligible for a Medicare Drug Plan?

When someone first becomes eligible to enroll in a government-sponsored Medicare "Part D" prescription drug plan, enrollment is considered timely if completed by the end of his or her "Initial Enrollment Period" which ends 3 months after the month in which he or she turned age 65. If you choose not to enroll in Medicare Part D during your Initial Enrollment Period, when you finally do enroll you may be subject to a late enrollment penalty added to your monthly Medicare Part D premium. Specifically, the extra cost, if any, increases based on the number of full, uncovered months during which you went without either Medicare Part D or else without "creditable" prescription drug coverage obtained from another source.

When May You Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

Eligible individuals may join a Medicare drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year from October 15th through December 7th. However, if you lose your current creditable coverage, through no fault of your own, you will also be eligible for a two (2) month Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to join a Medicare Drug plan. You should also know if you drop or lose your current coverage and do not join a Medicare drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (at least 1%) to join a Medicare drug plan later. Carefully coordinating your transition between plans is therefore essential. Those who miss these opportunities are generally unable to enroll in a Medicare Part D plan until another enrollment period becomes available.

For More Information Regarding Your Options Under Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

If you are unsure as to whether or when you will become eligible for Medicare, or if you have questions about how to get help to pay for it, please call the Social Security Administration at (800) 772-1213 or visit socialsecurity.gov. Specific questions about our prescription drug coverage should be directed to the customer service number on your ID card, if enrolled, or to the Plan Administrator.